

Table 13-1 – Risk Assessment for ITS Projects

	<u>Low-Risk Project Attributes</u>	<u>High-Risk Project Attributes</u>	<u>Risk Factors</u>
1	Single jurisdiction and single transportation mode (highway, transit or rail)	Multi-Jurisdictional or Multi-modal	With multiple agencies, departments, and disciplines, disagreements can arise about roles, responsibilities, cost sharing, data sharing, schedules, changing priorities, etc. Detailed written agreements are crucial!
2	No software creation; uses commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) or proven software	Custom software development is required	Custom software requires additional development, testing, training, documentation, maintenance, and product update procedures -- all unique to <u>one</u> installation. This is very expensive, so hidden short-cuts are often taken to keep costs low. Additionally, integration with existing software can be challenging, especially because documentation is often not complete and out-of-date.
3	Proven COTS hardware and communications technology	Hardware or communications technology are “cutting edge” or not in common use.	New technologies are not “proven” until they have been installed and operated in a substantial number of different environments. New environments often uncover unforeseen problems. New technologies or new businesses can sometimes fail completely. Multiple proven technologies combined in the same project would be high risk if there are new interfaces between them.
4	No new interfaces	New interfaces to other systems are required.	New interfaces require that documentation for the “other” system be complete and up-to-date . If not (and often they are not), building a new interface can become difficult or impossible. Duplication of existing interfaces reduces the risk. “Open Standard” interfaces are usually well-documented and low risk.
5	System requirements fully-detailed in writing	System Requirements not detailed or not fully documented	System Requirements are critical for an RFP. They must describe in detail all of the functions the system must perform, performance expected, plus the operating environment. Good requirements can be a dozen or more pages for a small system, and hundreds of pages for a large system. When existing systems are upgraded with new capabilities, requirements must be revised and rewritten.
6	Operating procedures fully-detailed in writing	Operating procedures not detailed or not fully documented	Standard Operating Procedures are required for training, operations, and maintenance. For existing systems, they are often out-of-date.
7	None of the technologies used are near end of service life	Some technologies included are near end of service life	Computer technology changes rapidly (e.g. PC’s and cell phones become obsolete in 2-4 years). Local area networks using internet standards have had a long life, but in contrast some mobile phones that use proprietary communications became obsolete quickly. Similarly, the useful life of ITS technology (hardware, software, and communications) is short. Whether your project is a new system or expanding an existing one, look carefully at all the technology elements to assess remaining cost-effective service life.